

## PRESS RELEASE

7 February 2015

### Children to meet best-selling authors at Derby Book Festival

Best-selling authors, **Michael Morpurgo** and **Andy Cope**, will be meeting children from Derby City primary schools this summer as part of **Derby Book Festival**, which will be held from **1 – 7 June**. The authors will host events at Derby Theatre and Central Library where they will talk about their books, what inspires their writing, and answer the children's questions.

**Michael Morpurgo**, former Children's Laureate, will be sending invitations to six lucky children from every city primary school to meet him for a special event at Derby Theatre on **Monday 8 June**. Michael, whose novels include *War Horse*, later adapted for screen by Steven Spielberg and a worldwide stage sensation, and *Private Peaceful*, will meet children from Years 5 and 6, and schools are being encouraged to read a selection of his books before they meet him to hear him read and talk to them about his books. The event will be free for all schools and aims to inspire children's love of reading by enabling them to meet one of their favourite authors.

Zoe Fletcher, Head Teacher at Borrow Wood Primary School was delighted to hear about the primary schools event: "Our children love Michael Morpurgo's books and it is vital that we encourage a passion for books and reading which will stay with them into adulthood. Michael Morpurgo's books tackle some difficult issues and by exploring them through his stories, children are able to discover the world and understand new concepts. To have the opportunity to meet the author of some of their favourite books is a chance of a lifetime!"

Zoe added: "As a school we will be planning our Book Week to coincide with Derby Book Festival. "

Michael Morpurgo will be appearing at the Festival's closing event on Sunday 7 June with folk trio, Coope, Boyes and Simpson at Derby Theatre. For those who can't wait until June, Derby Theatre is presenting a performance by Theatre Alibi of Michael Morpurgo's book *I Believe in Unicorns* from Tuesday 7 to Thursday 9 April. Full details are available here: <https://www.derbytheatre.co.uk/i-believe-unicorns>

School children in the city will also have the opportunity to meet Derby-born author, **Andy Cope** and his *Spydog*, 'Lara', in Central Library on **Wednesday 3 June**. Andy's first book in the hugely popular *Spydog* series won the Redhouse Children's Book of the Year in 2006 and the Richard and Judy Book Club Prize. He has also written the equally well-known *Spy pup* books. There will be three sessions throughout the day when schools are invited to bring classes and groups of children to meet Andy and Lara and ask questions. There will be a small charge to schools for this event. For secondary school pupils: there will be visits from two local authors who write for the teen/young adult audience: Bali Rai from Leicester and Paula Rawsthorne from Nottingham. The authors will visit on

**Tuesday 2 June** and **Thursday 4 June** respectively and schools will be invited to sign up for these visits.

Pre-school children won't miss out on the activities. Derby Museum's popular 'Make and Do sessions' for tots will feature David Sudbury's picture book *King of Rome* in their new Nature Gallery on Friday 5 June. Festival partners, Déda and Derby Theatre are both presenting book-related theatre productions. At Déda, Blunderbus Theatre will have two performances based on the popular children's books by Jez Alborough, *Duck in the Truck* on **Saturday 6 June**. Derby Theatre will present two performances of a new show Bookstory in their Studio Theatre on **Sunday 7 June**.

Throughout the Festival, children can take part in the Waterstones Children's Book Trail, where they can try to spot well known children's book characters in the shop windows along Sadlergate. There will also be storytelling sessions in the Market Place and Intu Derby on **Saturday 6 June** and 'Make It' sessions in the Silk Mill on **Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 June** throughout the day.

Full details of these and all the other Festival activities and events will be available when the Festival programme is revealed on World Book Night, 23 April.

- ENDS

#### **Notes to Editors**

For more information contact Sian Hoyle, Festival Organiser at [sian.hoyle@talktalk.net](mailto:sian.hoyle@talktalk.net) or call her on 0776 1379562

The first Derby Book Festival will be held from 1 – 7 June 2015 in venues across the city with a programme packed with book related activities and events for all ages and interests. Derby Book Festival is a registered charity.

The Festival will celebrate the joy of books and reading, from author talks, discussions, live performances, films, quizzes and workshops for budding writers, to children's book trails, storytelling, theatre performances and 'Make It' sessions. The Festival will include internationally acclaimed writers, as well as those with a Derby connection, covering a range of interests, including cycling, railways, football, cricket, climbing and photography. There's something for everyone!

Michael Morpurgo website: [www.michaelmorpurgo.com/](http://www.michaelmorpurgo.com/)

Andy Cope website: [www.spydog451.co.uk/](http://www.spydog451.co.uk/)

Bali Rai website: [www.balirai.co.uk/](http://www.balirai.co.uk/)

Paula Rawsthorne website: [www.paularawsthorne.wordpress.com/](http://www.paularawsthorne.wordpress.com/)

#### **More information about Book Story at Derby Theatre:**

Monstro Theatre

#### **BOOKSTORY**

Sun 7 June, 11.30am & 2pm

Tickets £9 Concessions £6

In Brian's library, the books are all in a muddle. The Romance is rubbing shoulders with the DIY manual and the Dictionary is sharing a shelf with the Whodunnit. To save their confused library (and its confused librarian) the books must work together – but how? Books can't move...or can they?

To discover their real powers the books will first have to face their deadliest enemies...

*Bookstory* is a tiny puppet musical with some very big ideas. It uses songs, puppetry and dynamic performance to tell the story of the story in the digital age.

Perfect for 7 +

**More information about Duck in the Truck at Déda**

Blunderbus Theatre Company

**Duck in the Truck**

Sat 6 June, 11.30am & 2.30pm

£6

Based on the bestselling book by acclaimed children's author **Jez Alborough**, this funny, silly, yucky mucky show will have you giggling away, singing along and laughing out loud.

Ducklings **aged 3 - 7 years old** will love this hilarious tale, but for those grown-up ducks who waddle along, they'll have lots of fun, too. It's totally quackers!

Join Duck and his friends in this happy new adventure with puppetry, sing-along songs and plenty of opportunities to join in along the way.

But, don't forget to wear your wellies!